Wheat procurement

1883. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the procurement of wheat during the Rabi Marketing season 2005-06 is estimated to be 180 lakh tonnes against 168 lakh tonnes last year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that wheat production for the ensuing Rabi season is expected to be around 25 million tonnes;

(c) whether Government have finalised arrangements for procurement of Rabi wheat and coarse cereals; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The production of wheat, as per the Second Advance Estimated, during 2004-05 is expected to be 73.03 million tonnes.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. All arrangements for the procurement of wheat and coarse cereals for the Rabi Marketing season 2005-06 have been finalized during the meeting of Food Secretaries of wheat producing States held on 8th February, 2005.

Approval for MRP on packaged goods

1884. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) printed on the packages and packed consumer goods is by and large very high and costlier;

(b) if so, Government's response thereto;

(c) whether Government are considering to make it mandatory to get the MRP approved by an appropriate agency by safeguarding the interest of consumers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) The Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 1977 require declaration of retail sale price of a package in the form MRP.....(inclusive of all taxes), for information of consumer. Declaration of MRP on package has to be made by manufacture or packer of the commodity. The Rules have penal provision, which prevent the retail dealer from selling the package at a price higher than the declared MRP. The Government do not have information on the cost of production of commodities in such packages.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal under consideration to make it mandatory to get the MRP approved by an appropriate agency. Competitive market forces would discourage manufacturers/packers from declaring unreasonably high MRP.

Loan from SDF to sugar factories

1885. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government provides loan from the Sugar Development Fund to sugar factories for cane development;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of such proposals, duly recommended by State Governments, have been received since 2000, State-wise and still pending for consideration;

(d) the reasons for delay in disposing of these proposals; and

(e) by when loan from Sugar Development Fund for cane development is likely to be sanctioned to sugar factories in the country, with particular reference to Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Under Rule 17 of SDF Rules, 1983, loans are provided to a sugar undertaking for development of sugarcane in its area upto 90% of recommended project cost for the following purposes: